

62/ The foregoing citations speak for themselves. Attention may merely be called in passing to three points, particularly in the passages from Viedma—the fluidity of band membership, the kinship nucleus of the band, and the system of family hunting grounds very similar to that prevalent among the linguistically related *Chon*-speaking peoples, the *Ona*. (Cf. also on this third point, Krickeberg, 1934, pp. 331-332).

622 The headman's chief function in peacetime, in addition to the functions mentioned in the preceding paragraphs, was to harangue the band each morning and voice the day's agenda as regarded hunting and traveling. (For a text example of such a hunting exhortation, see Hunziker, 1928 a.) He had practically no authority to issue orders; nobody would have obeyed him. Nor did he act as authoritative judge in disputes. The average *Tehuelche's* attitude appears to have been that of Musters' Indian, Cuastro, who with his dying breath shouted out: "I die as I have lived—no cacique orders me" (Musters, 1871, pp. 80-81, 184). The headmanship was usually, but not always, hereditary, from father to son.

627
578 Disputes.—There was no set judicial procedure. Conflicts between men of the band were commonly settled by fist fights, or else with the bolas, the disputants in the latter case being corseleted and helmeted; between women, by tongue lashings, hair pulling, and clubbing (Viedma, 1837 b, p. 81); Mufiz, 1917, pp. 212-213); often before an interested gathering of their fellow tribesmen and tribeswomen, who abstained from interfering and greatly enjoyed the spectacle, so Viedma (1837 b, p. 81) informs us.

72/ Bloody feuds between bands, occasioned by trespass, horse or woman stealing, or other causes, were common. The *Tehuelche* were far from being pacifists, but rather the contrary. The various bands would sometimes unite, in loose temporary or more lasting confederations, against common enemies—the Argentine *Araucanians*, the *Puelche*, or the Whites. The leaders had considerable influence, depending, it would seem, a great deal upon their abilities and personalities.

WARFARE

41/ The chief fighting weapons of the later *Tehuelche* (on the warlike pursuits, and for that matter on the whole political culture of the early *Tehuelche*, we have practically no information) were the long lance and the bolas, especially the bola perdida, to which were added, when obtainable, metal swords and knives of Spanish provenance, and guns and pistols. D'Orbigny (1835-47, 2:117) mentions a "dard" [javelin? for hunting?], and Sánchez Labrador (1936, p. 45) states that when an enemy could not be reached with the lance as held it was sometimes thrown at him. Heavy coats of multiple hide and

133 sheet of water from the melting snows. Lake Viedma lies some miles to the southward from the head of the valley, and I should be inclined to think that the course of the Rio Chico, which undoubtedly flows from it, would be found to come from the south to north, and bend easterly at the head of the valley, where it unites the numerous streams as described by Viedma in his journey in 1580. I am also inclined to think that Viedma being taken twice across the Rio Chico mistook the river at the second crossing for another, which he has marked as the Chalia, a name, by the way, unknown to the Indians, save as applied to an unsavoury parasite only too common among them. The follow-

- 578 ing morning, September 2, we were sitting quietly round the fire discussing a breakfast of boiled ostrich prepared by the lady of the house, when suddenly the clash of knives was heard, and we saw two Indians, destitute of mantles, with naked swords in their hands, run across from Camillo's to Crimé's toldo. In a minute everything was in an uproar; arms were produced, guns and revolvers loaded, and some of the Indians equipped themselves in coats of mail, and others, with the assistance of the women, padded themselves about the chest and upper part of the body with thick blankets and corconillas or saddle-cloths. Knowing what was about to happen, the women, and with them all the Chilian deserters, except one, beat a retreat to a safe distance from the toldos. Having assumed my arms, and feeling thoroughly mystified as to the real cause of this excitement, I went to Camillo's toldo, where the scene explained itself. He was lying on his bed dead, with a frightful gash in his side, having been murdered by Cuastro, one of the Indian whom we had seen running to Crimé's tents. On issuing from the toldo Casimiro met me, and asked for a revolver, as he had no firearms, and I lent him one accordingly. The Indians showed by their changed countenance all the fury of fight; their very complexions seemed ghastly, and their eyes glared and rolled, seeming to see blood. The two opposing parties,

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the Southern Indians—friends of Crimè, who was a cousin⁵⁷⁸ of Cuastro—and Orkeke's and Casimiro's people, or the Northern party, were soon ranged in open line at some twenty yards distance from each other. Cuastro was conspicuous by his tunic or 'buff coat' of hide studded with silver, while his only weapon was a single sword or rapier. The fight commenced with an irregular discharge of guns and revolvers, which lasted a few minutes, till some of the Northern or Orkeke's Indians, led by Casimiro, closed up, and a hand-to-hand contest with swords and lances took place, resulting in the death of Cuastro and the severe wounding of two or three Southern Indians. The Northerners then drew off to reload, and were about to renew the action, when Tankelow proposed a truce, which was accepted on the understanding that both parties were to march at once in the same direction. The women and children were then recalled from the bushes whither they had retired, the horses brought up, and the dead buried. The Tehuelches' lance is^[H] entirely different to that of the Araucanos or Pampas, and is only used when fighting on foot; it consists of a heavy shaft eighteen feet in length, at the extremity of which a blade is fixed about eighteen inches long, constituting a most formidable weapon in the hands of an expert Indian. Cayuke, whom I have before mentioned, in this fight was armed with the lance, and ran Cuastro through the body, although protected by his mail and endeavouring to parry the point with a sword. This Cuastro was a brave man; when dying, with several bullets in his body, and several lance thrusts, he sprang up to his full height and called out, 'I die as I have lived—no cacique orders me;' his wife then rushed up to him crying and sobbing, but he fell down dead at the same moment. Casimiro had a narrow escape; he parried a blow of a sword with what may be termed the slack part of his mantle, but if the blow had caught him on the head, as intended, it would have ended his career then and there. The casualties were a wound in Crimè's leg, and

- 578 a lance thrust clean through the thigh of Hummums, a young Indian, who seemed to care very little about it. The fight
 628 originated out of a vendetta between Cuastro and Camillo, the latter having some years before caused the death of a member of the family of the former, who had on a previous occasion endeavoured to avenge it on Camillo, and he had only attached himself to our party, in company with Crimé, in order to obtain an opportunity of assassinating
 674 Camillo. This Cuastro had been suspected on good grounds of making away with Mendoza, the Argentine sent from Buenos Ayres in company with Casimiro, and who mysteriously disappeared; and he had certainly, when under the influence of rum, at Santa Cruz, murdered his own wife Juana, a daughter of Casimiro, so that brave as he was he had richly deserved the fate he met with.

- 578 After the obsequies of the dead had been hurriedly performed—a description of which is reserved for another place—the tents were struck, and all marched off, the men remaining armed, and each party travelling separately. Cayuke was sent back some miles to ascertain if there were any signs of the other Southern Indians, who were half expected to overtake us; but he returned some hours later with no intelligence. We marched a few miles up the valley, rather coasting the northern hills, and encamped by a most beautiful circular spring, the water bubbling up through pure white sand and forming a tiny brook, while little fishes darted across in the basin. The Indians still remained with arms ready to hand—were very silent and ate nothing. Several of the Northerns came into our toldo towards evening, and remained a long time conversing by the embers of the fire, and ever and anon one of the widows of the deceased would break out into a wail of lamentation, sobbing in the most dismal and melancholy manner, the lament at times being taken up by some of the older hags.

On the following day Crimé sent for me to dress his leg, imagining, of course, that I undertook surgery; so I washed

the wound and bandaged it with cold water bandages, which 578 ● appeared to be successful, as in a few days it inconvenienced him but little. Thence proceeding to Casimiro's toldo—the smallest I ever saw—I got him to cover my saddle with a guanaco skin I had obtained on the road. The children appeared to be the only members of the party unaffected by the prevailing gloom. They had found a snow-bank in a nook, and amused themselves sliding down it on a bit of wood *à la Russe*. This evening things looked very black again. A consultation was held in Orkeke's toldo, and although it was carried on in a low tone, and I was little conversant with the Tehuelche tongue, I heard my name frequently mentioned in connection with a revolver, and also the Chilians. I was much puzzled at what was going on, but as Mrs. Orkeke brought me some supper in the most gracious and smiling manner, did not trouble myself more than to overhaul my arms quietly, and see they were ready for use. I subsequently found out that a plot had been set on foot amongst the Chilians to rise, rob, and murder the Indians, and escape with the horses. Some, however, my informant among the number, refused to join. The Indians, who are naturally quick-sighted, had conceived a suspicion that all was not right, and were debating whether it would not be better to kill the Chilians at once, before they became more troublesome; but Casimiro prevailed on them to let them remain until they did something to necessitate their destruction; and so they escaped for the present.

September 5th, at an early hour, we were awake by 133 Orkeke's marching harangue; and after coasting the hills bordering the valley for a few miles, bade adieu to the valley of the Rio Chico, and struck into a gorge of the northern hills, leading into an uneven valley lying between low irregular hills of decomposed lava, which we followed, passing several small lagoons in the lower hollows, around which there was invariably a yellow description of clay. The hills were everywhere covered with scrub, and presented a wild,

would inevitably starve without a knowledge of the route or ~~own~~ guides.

During our stay here I nearly fell a victim to a matrimonial ⁵⁸⁴ entanglement. A fair young Indian, whose hair cut across ^[302] the forehead denoted widowhood, moreover having several mares and considerable possessions, to whom I had perhaps paid some slight attention, proposed that I should set up toldo with her. This was quite out of my programme of the journey, but inasmuch as the alliance might prove useful, as well as agreeable, and feeling lonely in the absence of any particular friend, I half agreed; so a go-between was despatched to arrange the dowry, and it was settled that I should give a revolver in exchange for two horses to be provided by the fair one's friends. However, the evening before the happy day on which we were to have been united, the alarm came, and as she belonged to the Southern Indians, I thought better of giving up my arms; so I assigned as a reason for withdrawing from my bargain, that I did not wish to leave my friend Orkeke's toldo. I have no doubt that her people, desiring the help of my firearms, had suggested the match to secure me to support their side. The lady at first was rather disgusted, but soon got over it, and we remained on our former friendly terms.

In this encampment two disagreements occurred between ⁵⁹³ Indians and their wives, which were the only matrimonial ⁵⁷⁸ squabbles that came under my notice during my wanderings in their company. One occurred between Tankelow and his spouse in our toldo. It began by Tankelow's striking his daughter, which his wife angrily resented; from words they came to blows, and the squaw was getting rather the best of it, when Mrs. Orkeke interposed with a strong arm, and forcibly put a stop to the disturbance.

The following day Tankelow drove his horses off separately, ⁶⁰⁰ but towards evening a reconciliation was effected. On the 3rd of October we left Gelgel-aik and marched west in the face of a bitterly cold wind. In the hunt not less than seven

employed to stroll about and practise. Besides their use, ^{our} my practical training had enabled me soon to acquire the art of manufacturing them, and our many idle hours were employed in plaiting ostrich sinews, so that I contrived to fit up an extensive assortment, some of which I used to barter for tobacco. The weather during our stay here became worse, rain, sleet, and gales of wind prevailing; and the toldos, from the continuous rain and the marshy nature of the ground, became so wet and wretched as to be almost uninhabitable, so that we marched on the 16th over a level pampa—smoke to the eastward being observed and duly answered during the journey. We encamped at night on the north side of a small rapid stream, in a place called 'Pelwecken,' situated a league from the wooded river, the trees of which were visible from the encampment. I here saw a new game played ^[525] by the Indians which resembled that known amongst school-boys as 'knucklebones,' being played with small stones in lieu of the bones, and heavy stakes were lost and won on the chances. On Sunday, the 17th, the Indians started to hunt in the vicinity of the wooded river, and Casimiro proposed that I should accompany him to the woods to cut poles for the toldos, and timber for working saddles. Orkeke, however, for some reason or another, recommended me to stay quietly in the toldos; and as advice is sometimes almost the same as a command, I acquiesced, although longing to enjoy a close view of a tree again after so much wandering over the treeless pampas. As the day was warm and fine, I strolled down the river in search of the eggs of the upland goose ^[136] (*Chloephaga magellanica*), yellow-billed goose (*Cygnus coscoroba*), and other water fowl, and returned about two P.M. with plenty of spoil. The women were superintending the ⁵⁷⁸ cooking of some of these, when one of them rushed into the toldo and cried out that the Indians were returning and a fight had taken place. A glance at the coming horsemen was at once sufficient to convince us that she was right. They came galloping back by twos and threes, swords drawn,

578 mantles hanging off their shoulders, and their faces glowing with fury. They at once proceeded to get their guns and revolvers to renew the fight. Orkeke, however, arrived and made a long speech, and ultimately quiet was restored. One man—a brother of Camillo—had been killed and left on the pampa. The sister of the deceased was frantic at his death, and, arming herself with a knife, attempted to avenge him; but she was soon stopped, disarmed and quieted. The deceased was armed with a six-shooter, and his assailant had only a sword; one shot missed him and the next barrel missed fire, whereupon he closed and ran his adversary through the body. Casimiro returned shortly after the remainder, and when he heard of the fight and the result, was for some time eager to renew it and avenge the slain man, who was a relation of his own, but at last yielded to Orkeke's arguments.

000 The following day the smoke to the east appeared pretty close, and, when we had marched on a little, two young men were despatched in its direction with private instructions from Orkeke, and we proceeded to the wooded river, where we luxuriated for a short time under the shade of a description of birch tree, and then forded the stream, which is of considerable width and very rapid. The Indians declared

136 that it was impossible for any man to swim across the river in the deeper portion below the ford, on account of some ferocious beasts which they termed water tigers—'Tigres de l'agua'—which would certainly attack and devour any one in the water. They described them as yellow quadrupeds, larger than puma. It is certain that two ostriches, which, being too poor for use, had been left on the bank, were found by us next day in the shallow water, torn and half-devoured, and the tracks of an animal resembling those of a large puma were plainly visible leading down to the water; but a puma invariably drags its prey to a bush; and, though jaguar will take the water readily, I have never known one devour its prey except on land, nor, as far as I know, are they found so far south. The animal may be a species of the

000 and sang out, 'Stop! Where are you going?' But, without making any reply, I galloped on, being not further interfered with, and soon joined my old friend. He then informed me that, being utterly disgusted with the late proceedings and general anarchy, he had determined to push forward by himself to meet the Northern Indians, leaving his wife and children under the charge of Cayuke. He therefore wanted the letters which I had written for him, and my own, which he undertook to forward at the same time. So I rode back to the toldos for the letters, which I carried to Casimiro without any one attempting to stop my way.

Having returned to the fire under the bush, I dismounted, and whilst cooking another egg, gave Orkeke a piece of my mind; quietly hinting that I carried ten lives about me. He assured me it was all a mistake, and had happened without any orders from him, the young fellows only wishing to try my mettle by way of joke. I replied that jokes of that sort were sometimes dangerous, and the subject was mutually dropped.

481 We encamped by the side of a stream, into which many of us soon plunged to take a refreshing bath, always a favourite enjoyment with the Tehuelches, who are powerful swimmers, and dive well. While resting here and sporting in the water

578 a better state of feeling arose, and the mutual suspicion and discord which had so long prevailed was gradually forgotten. Casimiro had left, taking one of the Chilians; and his spouse told me, amid a torrent of abuse of her better-half, that he had gone through fear, the other Indians having determined to kill him; and she added that he had the heart of a skunk, a vulture, and an armadillo. These combined would make a very nice mixture. That he was right in making his escape at this particular juncture was very evident, for the next day two young men were sent out, ostensibly as chasquis or messengers, to look for the Northern Indians, but in reality to try and overtake Casimiro and dispose of him; however, they returned without any tidings of the wily old chief.

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870) 1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

HENNOKAIA TO TECKEL.

141

Our camp at Chiriq presented quite the appearance of a ~~600~~ town of toldos, and fresh arrivals were still expected from the S.W.; but the Indians of the latter party, with whom we had not yet made acquaintance, sent a chasqui with an invitation to Crimé to join their party, and a message that they would ultimately meet us at Teckel. Accordingly, Crimé, who was now rich in horses and gear, having received many presents, bid us adieu, and set off with an imposing cavalcade. Poor fellow! he had better have remained with us, as the sequel will show.

The weather during the first weeks of our stay in Chiriq was warm and fine, but latterly the wind veered round to the west, and it changed to sleet and cold rain, and the normal Patagonian climate. The humour of the Indians seemed as variable, for old Orkeke grew exceedingly jealous. Jackechan often used to lend me a horse on the hunting excursions, and Orkeke one day asked me in a sullen manner whether I wished to change my toldo, and go with my friend. My reply that I had no wish to do so at present quieted him for the time, and he immediately offered me one of his best horses for the next day, which was a real treat. I am afraid I rather abused his generosity, as we had a great day chasing large herds of guanaco, and with a racer for a mount, one was induced to ride furiously. On the 20th of November it was decided to break up the camp and divide into two parties to hunt, it being considered that our united numbers were too great for successful hunting in one place. When all 578 ● were packing up and preparing to start, a row nearly broke out between two of our old party: indeed it was with the greatest difficulty, and only through the intervention of Casimiro, Hinchel, and two or three more, that blood was not spilt. Of course, if the fight had commenced between these two, such is the excitability of the Indians that it would soon have become a general battle. This, and a heavy ~~500~~ shower of rain coming, prevented our march, so the women unpacked, and the horses were let go again. Some few Indians

000 started to hunt, but came back shortly almost empty-handed, fairly beaten by the driving sleet and snow. During our stay
 281 most of us had refitted all our gear, and were well provided with bolas; many were the necks of guanaco stripped to obtain the hide for them, and for making 'manëos' (straps for securing horses' legs), whips, cintas (girths), lazos, 283 &c., &c. The work that I preferred was plaiting ostrich sinews for thongs for the ostrich bolas. The ostrich sinews are abstracted by dislocating the lower joint of the leg, the first sinew is then pulled out by hand, and the other drawn out by main force, using the leg bone as a handle. This bone is then separated from the foot, and the sinews left adhering to the foot; they are slightly dried in the sun, after which the extracted bone is used to separate the fibres by drawing it sharply up the sinews. When sufficiently separated, they are cut off from the foot, split into equal sizes and lengths, and laid in a moist place to soften; when sufficiently soft, they are made into thongs, cooked brains being used to make them more pliable, and lie better in the plaits. These thongs are plaited in four plaits (round sinnet) well known to every sailor, but the ends are doubled in a peculiar manner, which requires practice to manage well.

- 578 Before leaving Chirig another disturbance was nearly taking place, caused by one of the Chilians quitting Tchang's toldo and joining that of a man commonly called Santa Cruz, an Indian well known at Patagones, and allowed a ration of mares from the Government. Tchang, immediately on hearing of his departure, put on his revolver and collared the Chilian's horse. To this Santa Cruz objected, but Tchang kept the horse, and, revolver in hand, defied anybody's claim to it. After this little incident the camp was broken up, and the two parties divided—Hinchel marching S.W. and our party to the N.W.

- 132 After a very cold and hungry march in the face of a bitterly piercing wind, we encamped on the shores of a lagoon of some extent, called 'Hoshelkaik,' which signifies 'Windy-

in consequence of which a quantity of mares and horses were/65 slaughtered, and numbers of ponchos, ornaments, and other 764 property burnt by the parents in their grief. It was most distressing to see and hear the melancholy manifestations of sorrow, and the sound alone of that dreadful crying aloud, and the dismal 'ullagoning,' to use the Irish expression, of the old women, haunted me even in my sleep. The night of 755 our arrival a mock combat with the Gualichu took place, in which everybody joined. After dark, when many were sitting by the firesides conversing, and I myself was reclining on my bed smoking, the doctor came into the toldo, and communicated with the chief, who told all to get their arms ready, and loaded his gun: on a shout being set up all fires were immediately extinguished, and all commenced firing off guns, clashing their swords, and beating the backs of the toldos, and yelling 'kow-w!' at each blow; firebrands being, at the same time, thrown into the air by the women, with clamorous shouts and cries. The scene was wild and striking, the darkness of the night being only illuminated by the flashes of the guns or the sparks from the brands whirled high into the air. At a given signal all stopped simultaneously, and for two or three minutes the camp remained in perfect darkness, after which the fires were relighted, and things resumed their ordinary aspect.

The following day, strange to say, a real fight took place, 578 in which one man was wounded, and for a few minutes a general *méle* or free fight appeared imminent. Parties were already forming to cancel old blood feuds, when further mischief was checked by the return of Hinchel, myself, and others. We had been absent trying new horses on the race-526 course, which, as in almost all the camping-grounds since leaving the Rio Sengel, was a regular beaten level track of about a couple of miles in length, and my new horse had established his fame as a racer by winning a match over a distance of a mile and a half; meanwhile the quarrel broke out—such are the uncertainties of Indian life.

one else had to support the squaw till her suitor proved ⁵⁸² himself worthy, and acquired sufficient wealth to justify taking her to his wigwam; and, if he cared much for his *courty*, he would not be long in earning her; it would make him a first-rate thief, — the most indispensable title to favor in the tribe. It appeared that the possession of two horses, one for himself and one for his intended, was regarded as the proper outfit in a matrimonial adventure.

The women are somewhat given to quarrelling among ⁵⁷⁸ themselves; and, when their "combativeness" is once ⁸³⁷ active, they fight like tigers. Jealousy is a frequent occasion. If a squaw suspects her liege lord of undue familiarity with a rival, she darts upon the fair enchantress with the fury of a wild beast; then ensues such a pounding, scratching and hair-pulling, as beggars description. The gay deceiver, if taken by surprise, slips quietly out, and stands at a safe distance to watch the progress of the combat, generally chuckling at the fun with great complacency. A crowd gathers round to cheer on the rivals; and the rickety wigwam, under the effect of the squall within, creaks and shivers like a ship in the wind's eye.

While the *contract* of marriage is so jealously regarded ⁵⁸⁵ by the chief as to be subject to a veto in every case where a proposed match appears in his eyes unsuitable, the ceremony is literally nothing at all. Due sanction having been given by the supreme authority, the bridegroom takes home his bride for better or worse, without any of the festivity which graces similar occasions elsewhere. ⁵⁸⁴ About this time, — for, as I had no means of journalizing my experience, or even keeping the reckoning of weeks and months, it is quite impossible to assign dates, — a mat-

584 plenty of horses, and prove a highly eligible match for their daughter. The old fellow had been (for him) quite moderate, but this was too much. His rage completely mastered him. He rose up, seized the pappoose's cradle, and hurled it violently out of doors, and the other chattels appertaining to his daughter went after it in rapid succession. He then ordered her to follow her goods *instantly*, with which benediction she departed, responding with a smile of satisfaction, doubtless anticipating the promised luxuries of her new home, the vision of which, through the present tempest, fortified her mind against its worst perils. Leaving the lodge, she gathered up her scattered effects, and, accompanied by her mother, the bridal party disappeared.

593 The chief sat on his horse-skin couch, his legs crossed
• 578 partly under him, looking sour enough. Presently the bride and her mother returned, and now began the second scene. The chief no sooner recognized them than a sound — something between a grunt and a growl, but much nearer the latter than the former, and in a decided *crescendo* — gave warning of a fresh eruption. The rumbling grew more emphatic, and suddenly his fury burst on the head of his wife. Seizing her by the hair, he hurled her violently to the ground, and beat her with his clenched fists till I thought he would break every bone in her body, and reduce her substance to a jelly. Perhaps I was a little hard-hearted, but she had been one of my bitterest enemies, and I had a feeling that if some of her ill-will to me could be beaten out of her, I could be easily resigned to her fate. The drubbing ended, she rose and muttered something he did not like. He replied by a violent blow on the side of her head, that sent her staggering to the further end of the hut. This

last argument was decisive, and she kept her huge mouth closed for the night. There was a silent pause for some minutes, and, without another word, we ranged ourselves for repose. I thought the old heathen's conscience troubled him through the night; his sleep was broken, and he appeared very restless. Early the next morning he went to the lodge of the newly-married pair, and had a long chat with them. They thought him rather severe upon them at first; but, after a good deal of diplomacy, a better understanding was brought about. The young people could hardly get over a sense of the indignities they had received; but in the course of the day they returned, bag and baggage, to the old chief's tent, and made it their permanent abode.

We now moved in a westerly direction, and on the way succeeded in capturing a good deal of game. Their mode of dealing with the carcass of the guanaco is enough to dissipate whatever appetizing qualities the meat — in itself very palatable — would otherwise possess. It was no uncommon circumstance, while the squaws were removing the hide, to see the dogs tugging at the other extremity, the women, meantime, crying out "Eh! Ah!" in a dissuasive, though not angry, tone. If the animals become too audacious, the ire of their mistresses is kindled, and they break out with "Casharan cashahy!" a phrase equivalent [195] to that which, in English, directs its object to a region unmentionable in ears polite.

The Indians have, strictly speaking, no profane expressions. I never could learn that they worshipped or had any idea of a Supreme Being. The only observance which bore any aspect of religion was associated with something we

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492 the matter, put spurs to his horse, and told me to come on — "Bueno caballo, se campo, campo." I tried to comply, but it was hard starting the beast, though I used up considerable wood to that end. The chief having got far in advance, and finding me desperately in arrears, hove to, and waited for me. I toiled on, and succeeded in working a passage to his position. He dismounted, inspected the horse's feet, and, directing me to wait his return, rode off. He soon reappeared with a piece of guanaco-skin, which he tied securely about the hoof of the lame foot. I expressed some surprise at this method of shoeing horses; but he said, "Buenos zapatos,"— good shoes,— and the event confirmed his words. The lameness nearly disappeared, and we jogged on together without any further trouble.

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• 578 While at this camping-ground, the chief one morning arose in a towering passion at some words let fall by one of his wives, and exhibited another sample of the rigor of matrimonial discipline, very similar to that which graced the nuptials of his daughter. He gave her a tremendous beating, which seemed enough to kill her outright; but she took it very calmly, as a sort of necessary evil incident to the married state.

484 Once more on the move, the squaws taking charge of the furniture and baggage, including the papposes, and the men riding in advance as usual, to chase supplies for the larder. Game was scarce; we got a couple of ostriches and a skunk, — or a couple of skunks and an ostrich, I forget which, and it makes less difference to the reader than at the time it did to me. We cooked and lunched on the ground and turned our faces homeward with the scanty remainder. The women were busy erecting the wigwams. The ground

poles from top to bottom and make firm partitions. On the outside 342
 the hide touches the ground on the north, west and south. The entrance
 is always left facing east and is as wide as the entire tent, which is in
 the shape of an oval cave. Nothing whatever is placed at the entrance
 to close it except [80] in freezing weather, when it is closed by hanging
 a hide across it. The inner partitions are arranged from the center to- 342
 ward the back for each married couple, and the children and other 592
 family members and relatives sleep all in a jumble in the remaining
 part which is no man's land up to the door. Here widowers, widows,
 unmarried men and women, relatives, servants and slaves and, in fact,
 as many as are dependent on or related to the head or master of the
 tent, come together. Virgins here, in spite of the opportunity try, as 936
 has been said, to keep their virginity while they have hope of getting 937
 married; but if they should lose this hope they will take any man
 indiscriminately, and they and the widows spend the night merrily,
 taking up with the first man who cares to sleep with them.

Quarrels between men belonging to the same camp are decided 627
 by coming to blows with their fists and hands. They are not allowed to 598
 use any weapons, and no one dares to separate them until they give in
 or separate on their own accord. The onlookers applaud them and
 laugh. When women fight they begin in a sitting posture, to say of- [516]
 fensive words to each other until one of them starts to unraid her hair
 very calmly, at which the other does likewise, still keeping up the flow
 of insults. As soon as both have loosed their hair, they shake it, get up
 and charge furiously, tugging hard on each other's hair and yanking out
 as much of it as they can as it tangles in their nails. The other women
 and men just look at them, not daring to pull them apart. When they
 become exhausted they themselves separate and are as good friends as
 a result of this as though they had not fought. They allow their hair to
 remain loose for the remainder of the day. The women may not strike
 each other in their fights with hands or fists as do the men, nor may
 they pull or tear each other's clothes, only their hair, and should they
 do otherwise they are corrected by the surrounding spectators.

In time of sorrow, on the march, on very windy days, when it 302
 is very cold or freezing, the Indians paint their faces black or violet, 751
 the men as well as the women, to keep their skin from chapping.

Usually these Indians are of a sweet and innocent nature, and [57]
 they became so attached to me and they treated me with such simplici- (23)
 ty, especially the chief of San Julian, that had we had enough horses
 I believe there would not be a span of those lands which I would not
 have been able to explore in their company.

Buenos Aires, December 10, 1783

Antonio de Viedma [81]